DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 365 582 SO 023 410

AUTHOR Pardue, David
TITLE Alternative Approaches to Contemporary Mayan Cultures. An Annotated Bibliography. Revised.
PUB DATE Jun 93
NOTE 12p.
PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indian Culture; *American Indian Literature; American Indian Studies; Annotated Bibliographies; Anthropology; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Legends
IDENTIFIERS Guatemala; *Maya (People); Mexico

ABSTRACT

This document presents a bibliography of works dealing with the modern Maya. The titles listed are intended to complement the many academic studies devoted to the present day Maya. The document is divided into four sections: (1) personal histories, (2) dream analyses, (3) folktales, and (4) pictorial works. Each section is further divided between materials dealing with or originating in Mexico and Guatemala. All of these sources can illustrate cultural traits not usually discussed in traditional anthropological works. As far as possible, the texts listed allow the Mayas to speak for themselves, so that the reader may better understand their society. The items show that certain areas and peoples tend to be favored by researchers, and are continually restudied. The Tzotzil in southern Mexico are an example: they have been extensively documented since a project begun in 1957. Such studies have wider application, however, as such a high degree of homogeneity exists in the Mesoamerican area that, although individual cultures may differ in detail, the overall patterns are similar. The personal histories section lists 10 items dealing with Guatemala and seven from Mexico. The listings on dreams includes two items. The folktales section consists of four entries on Guatemala, and eight on Mexico. Pictorial works are two listings from Guatemala, and four from Mexico. Several items in the pictorial and personal history sections deal with political violence that escalated in Guatemala in the 1980s. (DK)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 365 582

Alternative Approaches to Contemporary Mayan Cultures:

An Annotated bibliography

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

DAVID
PARDUE

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 023 410

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SCOPE OF INTEREST NOTICE

The ERIC Facility has assigned this document for processing to: IR

In our judgment, this document is also of interest to the Clearinghouses noted to the right. Indexing should reflect their special points of view. 50

Alternative Approaches to Contemporary Mayan Cultures: An Annotated Bibliography

Compiled by David Pardue
University of Kansas Libraries
Lawrence, KS 66045-2800

Revised, June 1993

The modern Maya have persisted in their traditions. This is remarkable given the outside pressure, particularly felt by the younger generations, to abandon their native language and culture and to conform to the ways of their ladino neighbors. These Indians occupy a nearly contiguous territory in southern Mexico, Guatemala and Belize; in size they rank next to the Quechua-speaking population of Andean South America. There is an enormous amount of ethnographic literature on them, and it continues to grow yearly. The titles listed here are intended to complement the many academic studies devoted to the present-day Maya. Such sources as personal histories, dream analyses, folktales and pictorial works are included--all of which can illustrate cultural traits not usually discussed in traditional anthropological works. As far as possible, these texts allow the Mayas to speak for themselves, so that we may better understand their society.

The following items show that certain areas and peoples tend to be favored by researchers, and are continually restudied. The Tzotzil in southern Mexico are an example: they have been extensively documented since the advent of the Harvard Chiapas Project in 1957. However, such studies have wider application, as such a high degree of homogeneity exists in the Mesoamerican area that, although individual cultures may differ in detail, the overall patterns are similar.

PERSONAL HISTORIES

Guatemala

Biesanz, John, Mavis Biesanz, and Martín Ordóñez. "Autobiography of a Guatemalan Indian." In Men and Cultures: Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. Ed. Anthony F.C. Wallace. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960. p. 420-23.

Very brief autobiography of Ordóñez, a forty-two year old from Sololá, near Lake Atitlán. He is fully accepted neither as an Indian nor as a ladino.

Bizarro Ujpán, Ignacio. Son of Tecún Umán: A Maya Indian Tells His Life Story. Ed. James D. Sexton. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981. 250 p.

Autobiography of a Tzutuhil Maya from Lake Atitlán, taken in part from his diary and from taped interviews. Bizarro Ujpán (a pseudonym) provides cultural information and highlights numerous social problems. He is a poor labor contractor with a drinking problem who suffers from recurring illness.

Bizarro Ujpán, Ignacio. Campesino: The Diary of a Guatemalan Indian. Trans. and ed. James D. Sexton. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985. 448 p.

The sequel to Son of Tecún Umán, covering Ignacio's life from 1977 to 1983. Certain themes prominent in the first book--e.g. his alcoholism--continue to appear, as well as a recent development: political violence.

Bizarro Ujpán, Ignacio. Ignacio: The Diary of a Maya Indian of Guatemala. Trans. and ed. James D. Sexton. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992. 325 p.

The continuation of Campesino, this volume follows Ignacio's life from May 1983 to August 1987. It chronicles the aftermath of the most violent period in Guatemala's history, as well as furnishing unique cultural information on topics such as shamanism, cofradías, the rise in evangelical Protestantism, problems associated with military control of the countryside and human rights abuses. A useful appendix summarizes the first two volumes of the trilogy.

Colby, Benjamin N., and Lore M. Colby. The Daykeeper: The Life and Discourse of an Ixil Diviner. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981. 333 p. Spanish edition: El contador de los días: vida y discurso de un adivino ixil. Traducción de Juan José Utrilla. Sección de obras de antropología. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1986. 311 p.

Although this study contains some theoretical analysis, the authors call it a "text ethnography" because of the verbatim transcriptions which appear in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Shas K'ow the daykeeper, a combination priest, healer, and

teacher, recounts his life and gives a remarkable exposition of his philosophy.

Menchú, Rigoberta. I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala. Ed. Elizabeth Burgos-Debray. Trans. Ann Wright. London: Verso, 1984. 251 p. Spanish edition: Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia. Historia inmediata. México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1985. 287 p.

The recipient of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, this Quiché woman from San Miguel de Uspantán narrates her childhood, family life, and work. As one of the main themes is the development of her political awareness, she reveals details about Mayan culture, presenting a vivid portrait of how Indians and peasants are treated in Latin America. Rigoberta's autobiography has also been translated into French (Moi, Rigoberta Menchú, Paris: Gallimard, 1983) and German (Rigoberta Menchú, Göttingen: Lamuv, 1984).

Oakes, Maud. The Two Crosses of Todos Santos: Survivals of Mayan Religious Ritual. Bollingen Series 27. New York: Pantheon Books, 1951. 274 p.

An older, well-respected study of the religious practices of a Mam pueblo in northwestern Guatemala. Valuable for the ethnological data presented in Part 2, collected from three chimanes (shaman-priests). Oakes feels the shamans "may best speak for themselves."

Reina, Rubén E. Shadows: A Mayan Way of Knowing. New York: New Horizon Press, 1984. 116 p.

An anthropologist reminisces on his field experiences with the Pokomam in Guatemala. These highly personal essays reveal something of the Indians' philosophy, especially their reverence for and harmony with nature. "Each one of those conversations with traditional Maya men and women made possible a 'perfect day' in my life."

Saravia E., Albertina. El ladino me jodió: vida de un indígena. Guatemala: Editorial "José de Pineda Ibarra," 1983. 284 p.

A fictional re-creation of the life of a Guatemalan Indian, based on factual material gathered from Quiché informants. Tries to increase awareness of the Indians' oppressed status by giving an objective account of their cultural heritage.

Schwartz, Norman B. A Milpero of Peten, Guatemala: Autobiography and Cultural Analysis. Occasional Papers and Monographs 2. Newark: University of Delaware, Latin American Studies Program, 1977. 141 p.

The life history of Abel Pat, a mestizo from the pseudonymous town of San Andrés in the lowlands of Petén, Guatemala. Abel's story gives us a glimpse of how a small-scale farmer lives and thinks. Schwartz's conclusions are arguably the high point of the book; he analyzes his informant's biography with sensitivity and insight.

Mexico

Bartolomé, Miguel Alberto. "The Medicine Men Speak: Stories of Mayan Shamans of Yucatan." In Latin American Indian Literatures 2 (Fall 1978): 78-84.

Brief interviews recorded in 1976. Five hmeenob (shamans) discuss the process of initiation and how they acquired their powers.

Elmendorf, Mary L. Nine Mayan Women: A Village Faces Change. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1976. 159 p. Spanish edition: La mujer maya y el cambio. Traducción de Carmen Viqueira. SepSetentas 85. México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1973. 175 p.

Highly readable account of the world of Yucatecan women of Chan Kom, the area studied earlier by Robert Redfield, which provides detailed vignettes of nine informants based on material from "creative dialogues."

Guiteras Holmes, Calixta. Perils of the Soul: The World View of a Tzotzil Indian. New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961. 371 p. Spanish edition: Los peligros del alma: visión del mundo de un tzotzil. Traducción de Carlo Antonio Castro. Sección de obras de antropología. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1965. 310 p.

In this pioneering work, Manuel Arias Sohóm, a native of San Pedro Chenalhó in Chiapas, discusses his life and beliefs in a series of interviews. This former Presidente Municipal was "reputed as one of the pedranos who knows everything."

Laughlin, Robert M. Of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax: Sundries from Zinacantán. Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology 25. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980.

285 p.

Laughlin, curator of anthropology for the Smithsonian, has devoted himself to studying the Tzotzil since 1960. Of special interest is Part 1, which contains the journal accounts of the first two zinacantecos ever to travel in the U.S. The author notes that "they placed in my hands a Mayan mirror, in which are revealed the curious customs and bizarre behavior of their host and his countrymen."

Perera, Victor, and Robert D. Bruce. The Last Lords of Palenque: The Lacandon Mayas of the Mexican Rain Forest. Boston: Little, Brown, 1982. 311 p. Spanish edition: Los últimos señores de Palenque: los lacandones herederos de los mayas. Traducción de Enrique Lynch. Barcelona: Editorial Argos Vergara, 1982. 324 p.

Chronicles the modern-day Lacandon of Nahá, Chiapas from roughly 1977 until early 1981. Much of the story deals with Chan K'in, the t'o'ohil (religious and civic leader) of the group, and his attempts at adjusting to changes caused by Western civilization. Includes an introduction by Bruce, a well-known ethnologist and linguist.

Pozas, Ricardo. Juan the Chamula: An Ethnological Re-creation of the Life of a Mexican Indian. Trans. Lysander Kemp. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962. 115 p. Spanish edition: Juan Pérez Jolote: biografía de un tzotzil. Letras mexicanas 6. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1959. 117 p.

The classic biography of a Tzotzil Indian as retold by Pozas, an ethnologist for the Museo Nacional de Antropología. The author met Pérez Jolote while doing fieldwork in Chamula, and merely added some details of his own to flesh out his informant's account.

Wilson, Carter. Crazy February: Death and Life in the Mayan Highlands of Mexico. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974. 253 p. First hardback edition: Crazy February. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1966. 250 p.

A fictionalized account which grew directly out of Wilson's personal encounters in Chamula, a Tzotzil community. Introduces the reader to the political, economic and social aspects of daily life, with emphasis on the relations between the Indians and the Mexicans.

DREAMS

Laughlin, Robert M. Of Wonders Wild and New: Dreams from

Zinacantán. Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology 22. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976. 178 p.

A collection of 260 dream texts. The zinacantecos ascribe considerable importance to dreams; they portend the future, serve to communicate between mortals and the divine, and offer tests of endurance. Features an excellent introduction and brief biographical sketches of Laughlin's eleven informants, two of whom are shamans.

The People of the Bat: Mayan Tales and Dreams from Zinacantán. Comp. and trans. Robert M. Laughlin. Ed. Carol Karasik. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988. 282 p.

More dreams, accompanied by ethnographic notes. Laughlin observes "there is no question in the mind of a Zinacantec why men dream. They dream to live a full life. They dream to save their lives." Also contains miscellaneous folktales.

FOLKTALES

Guatemala

Hofling, Charles Andrew. Itzá Maya Texts with a Grammatical Overview. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991. 321 p.

Collection of material intended to document Itzá Maya, a language facing extinction because it is currently spoken by less than a hundred older adults in Petén, Guatemala. Hofling devotes an entire chapter to folktales and lore, in addition to transcriptions of personal narrative, expository discourse and spontaneous conversation. Although the format is designed for linguists (interlinear glosses with literal English translations), the texts reflect the inhabitants' rich oral tradition.

Mayan Folktales: Folklore from Lake Atitlán, Guatemala. Trans. and ed. James D. Sexton. New York: Anchor Books, 1992. 265 p.

Compilation of nearly forty folktales from the Quiché Maya, collected by Ignacio Bizarro Ujpán for anthropologist Sexton. The tales are all highly entertaining, whether they are cautionary (warning against laziness and adultery) or demonstrating a bawdy sense of humor. An introduction contrasts the Guatemalan Mayans with their more familiar cousins in Mexico.

Mayan Texts. Ed. Louanna Furbee-Losee. IJAL Native American Texts Series. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976-1980. 3 vols. (398 p.)

Thus far, three volumes of this series of texts from a large number of Mayan languages have been issued in a standardized format designed to appeal to linguists. The texts are of cultural interest as well. Includes myths, tales, rituals, and fiction, as well as personal narratives, descriptions of daily life, correspondence, and other casual texts.

Shaw, Mary. According to Our Ancestors: Folk Texts from Guatemala and Honduras. S.I.L. Publications in Linguistics and Related Fields 32. Norman, Okla.: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1971. 510 p.

A collection of legends, lore, and first-person accounts told to investigators seeking a body of material for linguistic analysis. A useful introductory chapter analyzes salient motifs in the texts.

Mexico

Bruce S., Roberto D. El libro de Chan K'in. Colección científica 12 : Lingüística. México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, SEP, 1974. 385 p.

Twenty-seven traditional narratives as told by Chan K'in, a Lacandon t'o'ohil (religious and civic leader). Although the format is designed primarily to facilitate linguistic analysis, anthropologists and folklorists will find that these texts offer insight into the Lacandon world view apart from their literary value.

Bruce S., Roberto D. Textos y dibujos lacandones de Najá: Lacandon texts and drawings from Nahá. Colección científica 45 : Lingüística. México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, SEP, 1976. 158 p.

Bruce, perhaps the world's foremost authority on the Lacandon, presents a unique example of Native American literature: sixteen brief texts by Lacandon authors, with parallel Spanish and English translation, accompanied by Lacandon children's artwork. These songs and poems were preserved as a result of Bruce's attempts to teach the Indians to read and write, using a phonemic alphabet which he devised. In a series of Appendices (p. 51-151), Bruce supplies in-depth linguistic and ethnographic comments directed towards trained anthropologists.

Burns, Allan F. An Epoch of Miracles: Oral Literature of the Yucatec Maya. Trans. Allan F. Burns. Texas Pan American Series. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983. 266 p.

Selections of oral literature from various genres, such as myths, ejemplos, historias, and wordplay, augmented with background material. Author attempts a theoretical analysis of the context of certain Maya speech performances. Some reviewers have criticized Burns for his choice of Yucatec orthography.

Contes et mythologie des indiens lacandons: contribution à l'étude de la tradition orale maya. Textes réunis et traduits par Didier Boremanse. Collection Connaissance des hommes. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986. 407 p.

A collection of ninety folktales and myths of the Lacandon, recorded between 1970 and 1981. Boremanse freely translates them into French and furnishes ethnographic and linguistic footnotes. He also includes a readable introduction to the culture and society of these Maya, who call themselves Hach Winik ('The True People').

Cuentos mayas. Domingo Dzul Poot, compilador. Revisión castellana, Graciela García de Trigo y Antonio Paoli. Colección Raíces 4-5. Mérida, Yucatán: Maldonado Editores, 1985-1986. 2 vols. (216 p.)

Twelve traditional stories in Yucatec Maya, with Spanish translations, as told by Dzul Poot's mother. These were collected as part of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia's efforts to preserve Mayan culture. Yucatec Maya is still a thriving language, with approximately a half million speakers in the Mexican states of Yucatán, Campeche and Quintana Roo, as well as in neighboring Belize.

Laughlin, Robert M. Of Cabbages and Kings: Tales from Zinacantán. Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology 23. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1977. 427 p.

An outstanding collection of 173 folktales, myths, and legends. Laughlin freely translates the original Tzotzil texts and provides ethnographic, folkloristic and linguistic commentary. He is also compiler of the Great Tzotzil Dictionary of San Lorenzo Zinacantán (1975), which represents ten years of effort and is considered to be one of the best dictionaries ever published of an Amerindian language.

Namej'ayejetik sok namej kopetik tabatsilk'op: Leyendas y cuentos tzeltales. México: SEP Cultura, CONAFE, 1983. 158 p.

Seventeen tales gathered in Tenejapa, Chiapas from Tzeltal Indians, with Spanish translations and brief explanatory footnotes.

Ya'yejik te mamaletik. Texto revisado por Mariano López Méndez ... et al. Palabras de los ancianos 3. San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas: Cultura de los Indios Mayas, 1983. 57 p.

Four short stories in Tzeltal, accompanied by Spanish translations.

PICTORIAL WORKS

Guatemala

Parker, Ann. Los ambulantes: The Itinerant Photographers of Guatemala. Photographs by Ann Parker. Text by Avon Neal. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1982. 149 p.

A thorough study with well-reproduced photographs, and descriptive text by Neal on the Guatemalan photographers' methods and attitudes. Half of the photographers working in Guatemala today are itinerants, continuing a tradition which began in the nineteenth century. The portraits also show that the Maya have no cultural background of photography, as they stand stiffly at attention, staring straight into the camera without a smile. Parkers's photographs show what the itinerants would normally be recording, but her superior technique and use of color photography allow her to present a more complete record.

Vecchiato, Gianni. Guatemala Rainbow. San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1989. 128 p.

Vibrant, full color photographs which celebrate the work of the Mayan tejedoras. Even in portraits, the textiles predominate, reminding us that weaving is a link to past tradition as well as a protest against the pressure to assimilate to Western dress. Vecchiato, an Italian painter turned photographer, writes that "Mostly I have taken in the Mayan colors, sights and sounds, until all my senses are intoxicated. For me this is an addiction I will gladly suffer, always."

Mexico

Bregnard, Didier. Refugiados guatemaltecos: fotografías de Didier Bregnard. México: Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados, 1985. 111 p.

As political violence in Guatemala escalated in the 1980s, many Maya were forced to flee to makeshift refugee camps. Bregnard, a Swiss photographer, collaborated in 1984 with the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees to produce a documentary record of conditions in these Mexican camps. His black-and-white photographs are not accusatory but depict what daily life for the refugees is like, as they eat, collect water, or work in agriculture and handicrafts.

Cancian, Frank. Another Place: Photographs of a Maya Community. San Francisco: Scrimshaw Press, 1974. 93 p.

A collection of eighty black-and-white photographs of Tzotzil Maya in Zinacantán, mostly taken in Summer 1971. Cancian, a trained anthropologist, organizes the pictures into six groups, each of which is prefaced by a short paragraph describing a phase of the daily life of these Indians. His photographs "convey a sense that the zinacantecos are living . . . occasionally excitedly, at times apprehensively, sometimes pensively, often happily and almost always with dignity and satisfaction."

Everton, Macduff. The Modern Maya: A Culture in Transition. Ed. Ulrich Keller and Charles Demangate. Essays by Ulrich Keller and Dorie Reents-Budet. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991. 259 p.

Black-and-white photographic essays which focus on several different "typical" Maya lives in Mexico, e.g. as farmers, chicle gatherers, cowboys, henequen workers and the changing role of Maya women. Everton is a photographer who has spent more than twenty years travelling and residing among the Yucatec Maya. His written text is interesting and unromanticized. These photographs succeed admirably in portraying the Maya as real people rather than as anthropological subjects for study.

Morris, Walter F. Living Maya. Text by Walter F. Morris, Jr. Photographs by Jeffrey J. Foxx. New York: H.N. Abrams, 1987. 224 p. Spanish edition: Presencia maya. Traducción de Marta Turok. Chiapas, México: Gobierno del Estado de Chiapas, 1991. 215 p.

Excellent introduction to the Mayan people of Chiapas, with five stunning photographic essays. Morris is an anthropologist specializing in Maya textile symbology. His discussions of such topics as domestic life and religious and curing rituals provide a glimpse of contemporary culture. The sections on weaving (p. 105-152) should be of special interest to weavers and fiber artists.